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Original Research Article

Study of knowledge and attitude towards breastfeeding in antenatal mothers at Chamarajanagara Institute of Medical Sciences, Chamarajanagar, India

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ABSTRACT

Background: exclusive breast feeding practice is major pillar in preventing infant mortality. This study was undertaken to know the knowledge and attitude of antenatal mothers towards breast feeding.

Methods: this is a cross sectional study in our hospital in which 264 antenatal mothers were included after verbal consent. Antenatal mothers were explained about the study, their knowledge and attitude regarding breast feeding is assessed by questionnaire. Study will be analysed by appropriate statistical analysis.

Results: In total of 264 antenatal mothers, most of them were between 20-25 years, majority in third trimester. Among them 68.2% knows breast feeding should be initiated within first hour of delivery, 90.2% is for no prelacteal feeds and 95.8% wants to feed colostrum. Only 42.4% wants to continue breastfeeding for two years. About 62.9% of antenatal mothers wants to supplement the child with food after six months. 81.8% knows breast feeding is not only helpful to the baby but also it prevents breast cancer in mother later in life. 21.2% wants to feed complimentary feeds as early as 3 months.

Conclusions: our study on knowledge of breast feeding among antenatal mothers shown most of them are against prelacteal feeds and wants to feed colostrums, but initiation of breast feeding within first hour of birth and weaning after six months and continuation of breast milk up to two years is lagging. Multiple educational sessions, visual aids, pamphlets, electronic media, counseling during antenatal period and in early post natal period is necessary to inculcate appropriate knowledge on breast feeding.

Keywords: Antenatal mothers, Breast feeding, Knowledge

INTRODUCTION

Breast milk is the best food for the new born. It has got not only nutritive value but also provides natural passive immunity to protect the new born from the diseases.

A major contribution of infant mortality can be prevented by practicing exclusive breast feeding. Unfortunately in India rate of early initiation of breast feeding is only 24.5% and the median duration of breast feeding among last-born children is as brief as two months. Further the rate of exclusive breast feeding (EBF) drops

progressively from 51% at 2-3 months of age to 28% at 4-5 months of age.¹

A series of systematic reviews shown breast feeding decreases child infections and dental malocclusions and increasing in mental intelligence. Mothers who breastfed are at decreased risk of breast cancer. Improving breastfeeding rates globally can prevent over 800,000 deaths in children under five years and 20,000 breast cancer deaths annually.²

WHO recommends initiation of exclusive breast feeding (EBF) within an hour of birth to six months, thereafter complimentary supplementation of food and continue breast feeding to two years and beyond.³⁻⁵

Several misconceptions in the community hinder the practice of exclusive breast feeding and practices prelacteal feeds immediately after birth. Antenatal period is the best period to educate women regarding advantages of EBF. This study is conducted to know the knowledge and attitude regarding EBF at Chamarajanagara Institute of Medical Sciences, Chamarajanagara and sensitising the antenatal mothers about advantages of EBF.

METHODS

This is a cross sectional study in our hospital in which 264 antenatal mothers are included from October 2018 to December 2018. Institutional ethical committee approval was taken to conduct this study in the department of obstetrics and gynecology, Chamarajanagara Institute of Medical Sciences (CIMS). Pregnant ladies attending outpatient department in our hospital daily between 9:00am to 11:00am are included in the study.

Study was briefed to pregnant ladies, whosoever willing to participate were given questionnaire (printed both in English and local language) questions were explained to them, time was given to fill the questionnaire. Data was collected, after this Breast feeding practices counseling

and video demonstrations were conducted to educate them. Data entered were collected and analyzed by percentage.

Inclusion criteria

- The all pregnant mothers attending outpatient department given consent to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria

- Any woman who is not pregnant attending outpatient department, all post natal women.

RESULTS

In this study a total of 264 antenatal mothers are included.

Table 1: Age and educational status and gravidity of antenatal mothers.

	Frequencies	Variables	Percentage
Age in years	16-20 years	57	21.6%
	20-25 years	132	50%
	26-30 years	56	21.2%
	>30 years	19	7.2%
Education status	Illiterate	Nil	
	1-5 th std	29	11%
	6-10 th std	146	55.3%
	11-12 th std	67	25.4%
	>12 th std	22	8.3%
Gravida	Primi	147	55.7%
	Multi	117	44.3%
Gestational age	I trimester	18	6.8%
	II trimester	42	15.9%
	III trimester	204	77.3%

Table 2 various breast feeding variables and its percentage.

	Variables	frequency	Percentage
First Breast feeding given by mother after delivery	<1 hour	180	68.2%
	1-4 hours	77	29.2%
	1-3 days	7	2.6%
	>3days	Nil	
Prelacteal feeds should be given	No	240	90.9%
	Yes	24	9.1%
Feeding Yellow milk after delivery	Yes	253	95.8%
	No	11	4.2%
Breast feeding should be continued for	6 months only	83	31.4%
	1 year	36	13.7%
	1 1/2 years	33	12.5%
	2 years	112	42.4%

Most common age group involved is between 20-25 years, (50%). All are literates; most of them are studied up to secondary school (%55.3%). Our Study has more of Primigravidas (55.7%) and most of the antenatal mothers are in third trimester (Table 1).

Almost 30% of antenatal mothers don't know the benefits of early breast feeding.9.1% of the mothers still inclined towards prelacteal feeds, 31.4% of the women want to stop the breast feeding at 6 months of age only (Table 2).

About 62.9% of antenatal mothers wants to supplement the child with food after six months.81.8% knows breast feeding is not only helpful to the baby but also it prevents breast cancer later in life. 21.2% wants to feed complimentary feeds as early as 3 months.

21.2% of antenatal mothers want to wean the infants after three months. 19.2% of mothers don't know benefits of breast feeding to the mother (Table 3).

Table 3: Assessment of knowledge of breast feeding in antenatal mothers.

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Breast feeding should be supplemented with other food	At birth	06	2.3%
	After 3 months	56	21.2%
	After 6 months	166	62.9%
	After 9 months	36	13.6%
Breast feeding prevents breast cancer later in life		216	81.8%
Breast feeding sagging of breast disfigure woman		04	1.5%
Breast feeding cause No use or harm to mother		44	16.7%

DISCUSSION

Breast milk is the best milk for the newborn baby. It is a perfect nutrition, and provides immunity to new born. It protects infant against infectious diseases such as gastroenteritis, respiratory diseases and otitis media. And chronic diseases like childhood obesity and asthma. For mother it not only provides bonding but also prevents breast and ovarian cancer.⁶

National family health survey (NFHS) 4 data 2015-16 for 15 states from India showed a rise in institutional deliveries to 82.2% with intimation of early breastfeeding stagnant at 47.7% only.⁷ In our study common age group is between 20-25 years and in third trimester (Table 1). 68.2% of antenatal mothers want to initiate breast feeding within first hour of birth (Table 2). Our study data is little improved compared to other state NFHS data.

In our study 90% of mothers are against prelacteal feeds (Table 2) compared to only 68% are against prelacteal feeds in other district of Karnataka.⁸

Mothers intend to Wean infants after 6 months is 62.9% whereas 21.2% wants to wean their infants after 3 months in our study. Whereas weaning is 86.5% after 6 months and 13.5% after 3 months in Upadhye JV et al.⁹

There is a estimation of 1.4million deaths and 10% of the disease burden in less than 5 years of age is found in children with sub optimal breast feeding and exclusive breast feeding less than 6 months of age.¹⁰

Lumbigaon P et al, showed that breast feeding education and counseling in antenatal mothers increases both exclusive breast feeding and duration of breast feeding among mothers post natally.¹¹

There is a strong evidence that maternal confidence /self efficacy is directly correlated to breast feeding duration and that high women's confidence the more likely she continue breast feeding.¹²

CONCLUSION

Our study on knowledge of breast feeding among antenatal mothers shown most of them are against prelacteal feeds and wants to feed colostrums, but initiation of breast feeding within first hour of birth and weaning after six months and continuation of breast milk up to two years is lagging. Multiple educational sessions, visual aids, pamphlets, electronic media, counseling during antenatal period and in early post natal period is necessary to inculcate appropriate knowledge on breast feeding.

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Ethical approval: The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee

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